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Contents for Week of November 2, 1931. Vol. X. No. 17

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© *Photograph from Ernest Peterffy*

THREE OF MADRID'S NEW VOTERS

Spain, by a recent decree, is the first Spanish-speaking country to give women the vote. The trio of newly enfranchised above are wearing the graceful mantilla, a scarf of lace which is more commonly worn in Spain and Mexico than the so-called "Spanish shawl" (See Bulletin No. 3).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Sungari River, Busy Manchurian Trade Route

SO MUCH has been said and written about railways and their relation to the present disturbed Manchurian situation that little attention has been paid to another great Manchurian trade route, the Sungari River.

For two decades new railroads have stifled traffic on some Manchurian rivers, but the greater part of the Sungari flows through a portion of the most eastern Chinese state to which the sound of a railway locomotive's whistle has never penetrated.

Only 60 Miles Not Navigable

For 1,130 miles, the Sungari winds from the heights of the Changpai Mountains, Manchuria's eastern wall, to the mighty Amur, which separates Siberia and Manchuria. In its course, the Sungari rushes through long forested canyons. Only 60 miles of its upper reaches are not navigable for shallow draft native boats and steamers.

Here, however, lumber rafts successfully negotiate the swift current. At Kirin, the first city encountered as one goes down stream, the importance of the Sungari as a commercial artery of a fast developing region is revealed.

The river is shallow: between 2 and 9 feet deep for the greater part of its length below Kirin. But traffic is heavy and the small harbors here and there along the river bank are a forest of naked masts rising above junks and other native commercial craft.

The stream flows northwestward from its highland source for about a fourth of its course. Then it absorbs the Nonni River, which drains most of northwest Manchuria, and sharply veers northeastward past Harbin and finally empties into the Amur.

Modern Steamboats and Native Craft

The Sungari Valley is like Manchuria as a whole: a fast-growing infant in commerce and agriculture. Broad grazing lands, well stocked with herds of sheep and cattle and Kansas-like grain fields, line many miles of its banks, but there are yet many portions of the fertile valley that have not felt the farmer's plow.

In a recent year nearly 7,000,000 tons of agricultural products were produced in the Sungari Valley, most of which were transported to market on the river boats.

Portions of the river, particularly above Harbin, are so hazardous that navigation at night is not attempted even by the most skilled pilots, but by day the channel is alive with traffic. There are junks gayly painted and unpainted, and smaller sampan-like craft, loaded to the gunwales with agricultural products, oriental families, their poultry and pets; and palatial steamers of shallow draft that are becoming so numerous that they no longer seem out of place on this oriental stream.

Sungari Fills Harbin's Market Basket

Travelers observe that Harbin is just as fortunate to lie on the banks of the Sungari as the Sungari is to flow past Harbin. The grain fields of the Sungari Valley have been an important factor in making Harbin the so-called Minneapolis of Manchuria and the great Manchurian mart that it is (see illustration, next page).

© Photograph by Capt. A. W. Stevens

FOR MANY YEARS SANTO DOMINGO WAS THE HUB OF SPANISH CULTURE IN THE NEW WORLD

An aërial view of the capital of the Dominican Republic, on the island of Haiti, showing the Ozamba River and the ancient fortress at its mouth in which Columbus was imprisoned. Soon after this photograph was taken in 1930 by an aërial survey party of the National Geographic Society, Santo Domingo was devastated by a hurricane (See Bulletin No. 3).

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Hat Fashion Revives the Ostrich Feather Industry

THE Eugenie hat is doomed, the style experts say, because it was too immediate and widespread a success. But the momentary fad—if it is momentary—did what economic experts tried to do, but could not accomplish—it revived the ostrich feather industry. Ostrich farms in South Africa, California, Algeria, Australia and elsewhere have reaped immense profits because the wife of Napoleon III put a feather in her hat, and the modern woman, keeping pace with a style trend based on the "Second Empire," did likewise.

Automobile Doomed the Ostrich Feather

Ostrich feather farming, as an industry, went into a decline with the advent of the automobile. When the motor car came into general use, women took to untrimmed, "windproof" hats the world over, dooming ostrich plumes to prosaic dusters, pillow stuffings, and circus horses.

Tailored costumes and felt hats of the World War period plunged the entire feather market farther into a hole, from which it did not emerge until this year. South African ostrich farmers had almost a million birds in 1914, it is estimated, which number decreased steadily until 1930, when about 100,000 remained. Drought forced the slaughter of between 400 and 500 of the big birds daily in Cape Colony fifteen years ago.

Skins Also Valuable

Before the World War, South Africa exported considerably more than a million pounds of plumes annually. In recent years ostriches have been profitable only as a source of tanned ostrich skin used in the manufacture of pocketbooks, shoes, and other articles, but the income from ostrich skin cannot compare with plume earnings when demand is brisk.

South Africa, where the largest living bird was first domesticated about 1863, is still the greatest producer of ostrich feathers. Before 1863 the wild ostrich was hunted throughout Africa for its plumes, but the wild bird had to be shot to be plucked, and domestication finally was introduced to save the birds from extinction. The ostrich was found easy to domesticate and bred freely under semi-confined conditions.

The chicks of the ostrich are hardy and easily reared, and by selective breeding and constant elimination of inferior birds the feathers of the South African domestic ostrich were raised to a high standard. In 1912 the South African breed was successfully crossed with a number of ostriches from Northern Nigeria, resulting in a new blend of feathers noted for their sensitiveness.

Most Pampered Animal

Although the ostrich needs constant attention, and consequently has been aptly described "the most pampered animal in existence," an ostrich farm is simplicity itself. Pasture land capable of growing cereals, and a few miles of fences, a water supply, and a warm, sunny climate—this is essential equipment.

The rest of ostrich farming is a matter of maintaining a regular supply of food throughout the six months required for the growth of a feather crop. The wild ostrich lives on native grasses, but the plumage of a wild ostrich cannot compare with that from modern domesticated breeds raised on alfalfa and cereals.

The traveler has but to visit the river bank to learn what the Sungari Valley contributes to the city's commercial prosperity. Coolies, bearing huge sacks of wheat and soy beans, bundles of Chinese cabbage and other products, literally swarm over the boats and form an endless parade to the river bank.

Harbin is also a railroad center of importance. Here the main line from Siberia crosses the line from Mukden and Port Arthur.

In 1658 the Chinese government built forty fighting boats on the Sungari to meet the Russian invasion. This was the first attempt of the Chinese extensively to navigate the stream. The shipbuilding yards were at Chuangchang (meaning shipbuilding yard). The site now is occupied by the city of Kirin. The Chinese Eastern Railroad built many boats to operate on the river.

Note: While the Manchurian situation is timely, students should consult "Manchuria, Promised Land of Asia," *National Geographic Magazine*, October, 1929. See also "Manchuria, Transformed By Railways," in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS, week of October 12, 1931. For supplementary reading see "Some Impressions of 150,000 Miles of Travel," by William Howard Taft, May, 1930.

Bulletin No. 1, November 2, 1931.

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HARBIN, ON THE RIVER SUNGARI, IS A BUSY INLAND PORT

Contrary to popular belief, many millions of Chinese eat no rice, but live on millet, wheat, and other grains. Modern American mill machinery is used here, and the growth of Harbin's flour trade has caused it to be styled the Minneapolis of Manchuria. Note the modern railroad bridge in the background.

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Spain is First Spanish-Speaking Nation to Grant Women Vote

THE National Assembly of Spain, equivalent to Congress in this country, has granted suffrage to Spanish women by a vote of 160 to 121. Spain thus becomes the first Spanish-speaking nation to give women an unrestricted vote. The new law doubles the eligible voters, raising the total from 5,000,000 to 10,000,000.

The action of the National Assembly is significant because the Spanish-speaking nations have guarded their women against contacts with political life more closely than have any other countries of the Western world. What action the other Spanish-speaking countries will take in the matter is problematical, but as Spain has in the past given them their language, laws, customs and culture they doubtless are studying the new Spanish suffrage law closely.

The Vast "Culture Empire" of Spain

The Spanish culture empire that covers five million square miles and numbers close to a hundred million people, was once a political empire—one of the greatest the world has known. It sprang into existence quickly in the stirring days of the close of the fifteenth century, and the beginning of the sixteenth, when Europe was being electrified every few months by some new discovery or daring bit of exploration.

It grew to the west rather than to the east. Portugal, by previous voyages had marked out the East by way of the south for her sphere. Therefore Columbus—also intent on reaching the East—sailed westward. From the moment he returned from his first voyage, reporting hitherto unknown land, the interests, imagination, and activities of the Spaniards all faced west.

New World Quickly under Spanish Rule

The adventurers and gold-seekers who rushed westward in the footsteps of Columbus soon carved out for Spain all the West Indies, most of South America and large areas in Central and North America. The island of Hispaniola, now called both Santo Domingo and Haiti, was the focus from which Spanish influence radiated. (See illustration on page 2.) Jamaica and Cuba soon came under Spain's wing, then the Isthmus of Panama, Florida, and the coast of Argentina, were reached in 1513.

The same year Balboa crossed the Isthmus, waded into the Pacific, and claimed it and all its bounding lands for Spain. Six years later the Spaniards sent Magellan across this newly discovered ocean. He found little land in crossing, but did set up a Spanish claim to the Philippines, which Spain later made a colony.

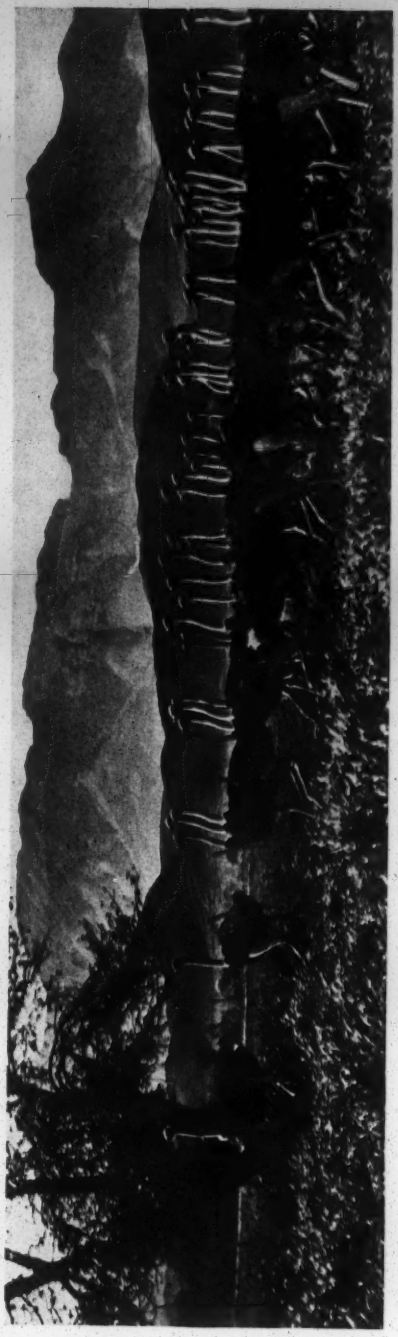
In the meantime Spanish control was spreading in the New World. The conquest of Mexico began in 1519. Panama City was founded the same year and became a starting point for expeditions north and south along the shores of the Pacific. Peru was invaded in 1532 and Chile came at least partly under control soon after. The California coast was explored in 1542 and land expeditions went about the same time into regions that are now New Mexico, Texas, Arizona and even Colorado. Settlements had previously been established in Venezuela and Colombia.

European Gains Soon Lost

At the same time Spain was the great power of Europe, controlling the Low Countries, much of Italy, and later Portugal, with all her Eastern empire. But over all these European and Eastern portions of her empire Spain had only slight control, and when the empire broke up they passed on to new or old owners, little colored by Spanish culture.

Spain made her deepest impression on her New World territories and on the Philippines. These regions fell heir to the Spanish language, religion, law, customs and architecture; and in the former, at least, these factors remain to-day as Spanish as in the mother country.

In exploring the Spanish-speaking world the logical starting place is Spain, fountainhead of the forces that have influenced one-eleventh of the earth's land area. And of course the explorer takes his course westward as did Spain's empire. Off the west coast of Africa four patches of territory—the Canary Islands—are encountered. Here the Spanish flag as well as Spanish influences rest. But here the Spanish flag is left behind; to such small proportions has the political realm of Spain shrunk.



© Photograph by Melville Chater

OSTRICHES, LARGEST OF LIVING BIRDS, ON A SOUTH AFRICAN FARM

Before the World War, South Africa exported more than a million plumes annually; but drought and a change in fashion reduced this output to only a fraction of that number. In recent months, however, a return to styles requiring ostrich feathers again boomed the feather market. There is also a demand for tanned ostrich skin in the manufacture of pocketbooks and other articles.

Regularity in feeding is important, because any check or lowering of the vitality of the bird during the period of feather growth causes a marked imperfection, like tree rings in drought years, in the feather at that particular stage of its growth. Proper mating also is a factor in maintaining feather standards.

Does it hurt an ostrich to cut its feathers? No; if the feathers are "ripe," that is, full grown, the operation means less to the bird than shearing to sheep. At the end of the six months' period the pith, which carried the blood to the growing feather, has dried down to the edge of the wing and the clipping of the feather at this stage is like paring one's finger nails. The stump or quill, if not pulled out three months later, will be pushed out by the new feather which starts to grow beneath it.

Can Be Profitable Type of Farming

Before the slump of 1913-14 ostrich farming was one of the most lucrative types of farming in South Africa. The capital required was small and the returns, if properly managed, large. One pair of good breeding ostriches could raise as many as thirty chicks, and the profit from the sale of chicks and breeding stock was as great as that from feathers in the best years.

The principal ostrich breeding districts are Oudtshoorn, Ladismith and Calitzdrop, all in the Cape Province.

Note: See also "Under the South African Union," *National Geographic Magazine*, April, 1931. For additional material about clothing see "Twenty Countries Dress the Well-Dressed Man," in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS, week of April 20, 1931.

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Famous Coin Added to Geographic Collection

PRESENTATION has been made to the National Geographic Society of a silver shekel, the kind of coin referred to in the New Testament mention of the "thirty pieces of silver" which Judas Iscariot accepted for betraying Christ.

The coin recently brought to this country and presented to the museum of the National Geographic Society, is the gift of F. Vester, in behalf of the American Colony of Jerusalem.

It was found with others in a clay urn by a workman excavating for the foundation of a new building in Palestine.

Often Mentioned in Bible

The shekel not only is of keen historic interest to numismatists (coin collectors), but is probably the best known token of ancient currency because of its frequent mention in both the Old and New Testaments. As far back as Exodus a shekel of that period is referred to; the price of 30 shekels elsewhere is stated as the "blood money" paid for the accidental killing of a servant.

In addition to being identified as the coin for which the high priests covenanted for delivering to them the person of Jesus, St. Matthew also mentions it as the temple tax.

Before the period of our Civil War counterfeiters reaped a harvest in London by selling counterfeit shekels, alleging that each was one of the "thirty pieces of silver" for which Christ was betrayed. These are easily detected because the cup and the inscription are different from those on the genuine coins in common use among the Jews in the time of Christ, which were first coined by Simon Maccabæus nearly a century and a half before His birth.

Bears Biblical Symbols

Upon the genuine "shekel of Israel" appears a sacred vessel, possibly a pot of manna, ornamented with jewels, and above it a Hebrew date. On the reverse is "Jerusalem the Holy," and a flower device, thought to be a representation of the budding of Aaron's rod.

In size it is slightly smaller than our quarter dollar, considerably thicker, and the edge is not milled.

The "American Colony" at Jerusalem is a community established just fifty years ago by Haratio Spafford, a Chicago lawyer, and his wife, and it now carries on extensive industrial and altruistic activities. Its membership, drawn from ten nationalities, has broadened its original work, that of teaching non-sectarian Christianity, to include maintenance of an orphanage, an industrial school, a children's health center, various arts and crafts, and charitable activities.

The gift coin has been placed in the reception room of the Washington, D. C., headquarters of the National Geographic Society where, along with souvenirs of the Society's many explorations, it can be seen by members and other visitors.

Note: See also "The Geography of Money," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1927. Students interested in the Holy Land should consult: "Bethlehem and the Christmas Story," December, 1929; "The Pageant of Jerusalem," and "East of Suez to the Mount of the Decalogue," December, 1927; "Among the Bethlehem Shepherds," December, 1926; and "Flying over Egypt, Sinai, and Palestine," September, 1926.

Bulletin No. 4, November 2, 1931.

The next bit of the Spanish world encountered lies in the New World. It is Uruguay, smallest republic of South America, where the children of Spain are carrying on the culture of the mother country. Beyond, eight other countries—all those of South America save Portuguese Brazil and British, French, and Dutch Guiana—fall, too, under the banner of Spanish culture.

Defections in West Indies

In the West Indies there have been defections. Trinidad and the Leeward and Windward Islands, although once all claimed by Spain, have lost or never felt Spanish culture. Over Porto Rico the flag of the United States flies; but it is still a part of the Spanish world. Spain is dominant in blood, traditions, and language. In old Hispaniola where the Spanish seed was first planted in the New World, the eastern half of the island shows strongly the Spanish impress. This is the Dominican Republic where language and law are still Spanish. But in the western half of the island, covered by the Republic of Haiti, Spanish culture and language have succumbed to those of France, and Africa.

Jamaica, once a stronghold of Spain, has long been dominated by British culture; and the Bahamas, claimed by Spain, have known only British influences. Cuba has been independent of Spanish political power since 1898, but is still culturally a part of Spain—the most Spanish of the West Indian Islands.

Through the Isthmus of Panama, Central America, and Mexico, Spanish cultural influences sweep unbroken as they have for the past three centuries and more. Florida shows little effect of her former Spanish ownership save in a few architectural touches and a few geographic names. Texas, too, was lost to Spain, but the effects there are greater; and in many a community near the Rio Grande the Spanish language is almost as necessary as the English. In Arizona and California, once under Spanish influences, the situation is like that in Texas.

Spanish Influences Linger in U. S.

But one American State stands on a different footing. New Mexico has barely passed the point at which its English-speaking influences weigh more heavily than its Spanish factors. Only a few years ago it could have been listed as a part of the Spanish world. Then its legislature was conducted in Spanish or in the two tongues; and Spanish was the current language on street and range and farm.

As it is the beam has tipped only a little; the interpreter is still an important person in the courts and it is easy enough to find communities in the State in which if one speaks no Spanish he can make himself understood only through some school child. These youngsters are being taught English now in the public schools and in a few generations will no doubt turn the scale overwhelmingly to English speech.

Continuing westward one finds no further traces of Spain's world-wide empire until he reaches the Philippines. There, in spite of the mixture of blood, Spanish culture took firm hold, at least in the non-Mohammedan sections. Spanish customs, laws and architecture will no doubt color life in the Philippines for many years to come. In speech, however, the passing of Spanish influence may not be so long delayed if the United States continues to govern the islands. Already English is in about as general use as Spanish, and if present educational methods continue the Philippines may yet join Jamaica and California as regions definitely lost to the Spanish world.

Note: Up-to-date references and illustrations of Spain may be found in "Madrid Out-of-Doors," *National Geographic Magazine*, August, 1931. For supplementary reading about Spain's vast "cultural empire" see: "Skypaths through Latin-America," and "Hispaniola Rediscovered," January, 1931; "Flying the World's Longest Air-Mail Route," March, 1930; "Buenos Aires to Washington by Horse," February, 1929; and other articles under the headings "South America," "Central America," and "The West Indies," in the Cumulative Index to the *National Geographic Magazine*, which may be consulted in your school or local library.

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Faeroe Islands, Home of Modern Vikings, May Have Airport

THE Færoe Islands, ancient port of call for adventurous Vikings who preceded Columbus across the Atlantic, may soon have an airport. A newly organized air-line company wants to make the rocky islands north of Scotland a stop on a proposed air mail route from America via Greenland and Iceland, with a terminus at Copenhagen, Denmark. Permission to erect depots and workshops on the Færoe Islands has been sought at Copenhagen.

A County, Rather Than a Colony, of Denmark

What color is the flag of the Færoe Islands?

Until recently when the blue-rimmed banner with a white field, bearing a brilliant red cross, was hoisted at Thorshavn, the emblem was almost unknown beyond the islands and Denmark. The Færoes, really a county, not a colony, of Denmark, are a group of twenty-one small islands, sprinkled over a small area about 250 miles off the northern tip of the British Isles.

When the islands were first settled is unknown. At Thorshavn, the capital, a city of about 2,000 inhabitants, the wooden buildings on strong stone foundations, topped by turf roofs, take the traveler back a thousand years ago when Norsemen settled there. On some of the southernmost islands, however, live dark-haired, dark-eyed people.

Thorshavn, rambling about the shore of the island and up the hillsides beyond, is a busy port. There are a few narrow streets winding between houses, but off these are mere paths leading to the "suburbs." Ponies have not been displaced by automobiles, or even by wagons and carts, so there is no demand for good roads on the islands, and there are none.

Men Cling to Native Costumes

The Færoes, although off the popular tourists' routes, do not entirely live in ages past. In some of the villages electric light bulbs throw their bright rays on paths that Viking feet once trod; telegraph wires are strung above ancient chimneys; radio towers throw their shadows upon turf-covered birch bark roofs; phonographs play for the entertainment of quaintly costumed men and women who sit on furniture that was built by the owners' ancestors before Columbus sailed west; and the staccato put-put of modern motors emanates from fishing craft that are patterned after those of Viking forefathers.

In the village streets and throughout the islands, men don their native costumes (see illustration, next page). Buttons are numerous on their hip-length coats, but the garments are clasped only at the throat so that the shiny brass buttons and fancy embroidery work adorning their vests are visible.

Knee-length breeches, long, brown hose, soft-skin shoes, adorned with buckles, tied to the ankles with white thongs, and a floppy cap complete the masculine costume.

A 600-Foot Climb To Reach Home

Many women have forsaken their voluminous dresses, white aprons with gaudy stripes, and colorful shawls. European fashions have won them, and frequently even the native-costumed women will be seen wearing high-heeled shoes.

Travelers are amazed at the lofty homes of many of the islanders, particularly on those islands which are rimmed by sheer cliffs, rising more than 600 feet from

© American Colony Photographers

BETHLEHEM HAS NOT CHANGED MUCH SINCE BIBLICAL DAYS

Marketing and bargaining goes on in this part of Palestine much as in the time when the silver shekel, similar to the one which has just been added to the museum of the National Geographic Society, was common currency. More attractive than the high headdresses of the women are the brightly colored orange turbans of the men.

the sea. Some islands have home-made elevators, but many islanders scale the rocks as a "human fly" scales a modern building.

The cliffs appear insurmountable but they are sources of life to the Færoe inhabitants. The ledges, from sea to summit, are the nesting places of myriad birds which form an important part of the Færoe diet. Native hunters, with ropes tied securely about their waists and long-handled nets in hand, descend the cliffs and return with several days' supply of food.

Half the Size of Rhode Island

If all the Færoes were merged, they would not cover an area half that of Rhode Island. They are treeless, brisk winds sweep them, and there are few harbors where ships are safe from the treacherous currents and high winds. Yet 23,000 inhabitants live a busy, happy existence on the islands. Isolation has made the inhabitants a versatile race. In the village shops are imported goods, particularly Danish goods, but there is a noticeable absence of home-made products, for the families usually make their own clothing and implements.

Acres of shoreline are blanketed with white strips of drying codfish. They are also builders, furniture makers, blacksmiths, sheep herders, tanners and hunters. The women are adept knitters, weavers, fish curers, and wool dyers.

Note: See also "Viking Life in the Storm-Cursed Faeroes" *National Geographic Magazine*, November, 1930.

Bulletin No. 5, November 2, 1931.

© *Photograph by Leo Hansen*

THE MASCULINE "PAUL JONES" OF MODERN VIKINGS

Men cling to old styles in the Faeroe Islands more steadfastly than women. Shoes with buckles, black knee breeches, a short jacket decorated with rows of bright buttons, and a soft wool "liberty" cap, striped red and dark blue or black, is the vogue for Sundays and holidays. Faeroe history, in 200 odd verses, sung to one tune without accompaniment, is the music for the shuffling dance shown above. Women are sometimes admitted to the party, but usually keep strictly to their own part of the circle.